

Taylor 2046 Comprehensive Plan Planning Principles

Principle 1: Protect and Reinforce Taylor's Distinct Town Identity

Taylor's residents consistently describe their town as quiet, peaceful, quaint, historic, friendly, and small. These qualities are not incidental — they are what residents most value about living in or near Taylor, and they are what distinguishes Taylor from Oxford and the surrounding region. Every planning decision should be measured against whether it strengthens or undermines this identity.

Survey grounding: Q2 (top descriptors included quaint, peaceful, historic, charming, friendly, and small-town); Q3 (small population and quiet lifestyle rated as the most valued quality); Q9 (an overwhelming majority favor a balanced, town-centered identity rather than a single-use destination focus); Q14 (losing small-town charm was the most frequently cited concern across 125 open-ended responses).

Principle 2: Guide Growth Proactively

Residents broadly accept that some growth is inevitable, but they are clear that it must be limited, carefully managed, and shaped by the community rather than driven by outside market forces. The town must enforce design standards, density limits, and a defined growth areas to maintain control over Taylor's future. Reactive planning is not acceptable to the community.

Survey grounding: Q4 (strong majority supports growth only if limited or well-designed; very few favor accommodating growth without controls); Q10 (design standards and strict limits on scale and density were the two most-supported policy responses; a defined village or growth boundary also received meaningful support); Q14 (uncontrolled growth and the absence of a comprehensive plan were the most repeated concerns); Q15 (proactive planning and engaged local leadership were the most cited sources of hope).

Principle 3: Use Infrastructure Intentionally to Shape Growth

Residents identify sewer, drainage, and road capacity as constraints on Taylor's future. The town should use infrastructure decisions particularly the deliberate control of sewer extension as a tool to manage density and preserve the town's rural character. Infrastructure investment should be targeted to support existing developed areas and essential public health needs, with careful planning of new land for development.

Survey grounding: Q6 (utility and infrastructure strain cited as a meaningful development concern); Q10 (proactive infrastructure planning was a supported response, but within a framework of strict growth limits); Q13 (drainage improvements were among the top-ranked community priorities); Q14 (sewer, drainage, and road infrastructure cited repeatedly as urgent concerns, with multiple comments warning against infrastructure-driven sprawl).

Principle 4: Preserve Open Land, Farmland, and the Natural Landscape

The farms, open meadows, tree canopy, and natural ecology surrounding Taylor are among the most valued qualities of life in the town. These assets should be actively protected through conservation easements, open space requirements tied to new development, and policies that prevent the incremental loss of agricultural land and natural cover.

Survey grounding: Q3 (rural and pastoral setting, farms and open land, and low traffic among the most valued qualities); Q7 (open farmland and meadows, tree canopy, and ecological health all received very strong preservation ratings); Q6 (loss of farmland cited as a significant concern); Q14 (tree clearing, loss of open land, and loss of natural beauty cited repeatedly).

Principle 5: Build a Connected, Walkable Town

Sidewalks and walking trails were the single most requested community improvement in the survey, selected by nearly 70 percent of respondents, far above any other option. The town should invest in a connected pedestrian network that links neighborhoods to the town center and to natural areas. Traffic calming on key corridors is also a stated priority to address safety as activity in the town grows.

Survey grounding: Q13 (sidewalks and walking trails were the highest-ranked improvement by a wide margin; traffic calming infrastructure was also a top-three priority); Q3 (walkability listed as a valued quality of life asset); Q11 (traffic described as manageable but increasing, with a meaningful minority already concerned).

Principle 6: Cultivate a Locally Rooted Economy

Residents support economic activity that is locally owned, small in scale, and consistent with Taylor's character. The most strongly supported types of new development are locally owned restaurants and shops, small-scale artisan businesses, and agricultural-related enterprises. Residents are opposed to chain retail, generic commercial development, and high-density or franchise-oriented growth.

Survey grounding: Q3 (local restaurants and small businesses among the most valued qualities); Q5 (locally owned restaurants/shops and artisan businesses were the top two supported growth types; agricultural enterprises also received meaningful support); Q13 (support for local farmers was a top-three community priority); Q14 (multiple open-ended comments explicitly opposed chain businesses, fast food, and generic commercial development).

Principle 7: Protect Housing Affordability and Long-Term Community Stability

Residents express clear concern that rising housing costs, short-term rental saturation, and outside investment could price out long-time residents, younger families, artists, and small business owners, the very people who define Taylor's character. Housing policy should limit short-term rentals, encourage context-sensitive housing that fits the town's scale, and ensure that growth does not make Taylor accessible only to outside buyers and investors.

Survey grounding: Q12 (limiting short-term rentals to protect long-term housing supply was the strongest housing policy preference, selected by over 50 percent of respondents; small, context-sensitive additions and live-work housing also received strong support); Q14 (displacement, rising costs, outside investors, second-home saturation, and the loss of affordable housing cited repeatedly as major concerns); Q15 (concern that long-time residents and younger families will be forced to leave as prices rise).